

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BANGKO 28764 01 OF 02 181120Z

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 DOTE-00 FMC-02 EB-07 AID-05 AF-08

ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-06 OES-06 IGA-02 SS-15

NSC-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 L-03 SP-02

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R 180830Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4811

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 28764

PLEASE PASS INFO FOR DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION AND MERITIME  
ADMIN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON, ETRN, ESCAP, TH

SUBJECT: ESCAP: TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE,  
25TH SESSION, OCTOBER 12-18, 1976, BANGKOK

SUMMARY: THE MEETING WAS GENERALLY UNEVENTFUL AND THE  
ATMOSPHERE CONGENIAL DESPITE CURFEW RESTRICTIONS OCCASIONED BY  
THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN THAILAND. PRIMARY FOCUS OF DIS-  
CUSSION RESTED ON THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RESTRUCT-  
URED COMMITTEE ON SHIPPING, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS  
AND WITH THE WORK PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

1. FIRST THREE DAYS DEVOTED TO TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS  
AND WERE RELATIVELY UNEVENTFUL. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY WAS  
VISITING NEPAL AND BANGLADESH AND HIS OPENING ADDRESS WAS  
DELIVERED BY HIS DEPUTY. HIGH LEVEL THAI OFFICIALS WERE  
PREOCCUPIED WITH THE POLITICAL EMERGENCY AND DID NOT DE-  
LIVER USUAL WELCOMING ADDRESS. IN HIS MESSAGE, EXECUTIVE  
SECRETARY URGED COMMITTEE INTENSIFY EFFORTS PROMOTE RURAL  
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 28764 01 OF 02 181120Z

TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT. ALSO URGED COMMITTEE EXERCISE HIGH

DEGREE SELECTIVITY AND PRAGMATISM IN DEALING WITH PROGRAM OF WORK AND PRIORITIES AND TO CONCENTRATE ON HARD CORE ACTIVITIES.

2. AFTER ELECTING THAI INSPECTOR GENERAL CORVANICH AS CHAIRMAN WITH INDIAN AND MALAYSIAN VICE CHAIRMEN, COMMITTEE REVIEWED RAILWAY ACTIVITIES. SECRETARIAT THANKED USSR, FRANCE, GERMANY, JAPAN, AUSTRALIA AND INDIA FOR EXTRA BUDGETARY ASSISTANCE PROVIDED DURING PAST YEAR. USSR DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME TO STRESSING IMPORTANCE OF TRANS ASIAN RAILWAY WHICH IT ANNOUNCED IS NOW OPERATIONAL BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA VIA IRAN AND USSR. USSR AGREED TO CONTINUE PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THIS SECTOR. SECRETARIAT EXPRESSED GRATITUDE TO U.S. FOR PROVIDING COPIES FRA STUDIES ON RAILWAY PROBLEMS UNDER REVIEW. AUSTRALIA EXPRESSED DOUBT ABOUT NEED TO CONTINUE GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO TRANS ASIAN NETWORK IN VIEW UNDP/CUTS, AND WITHDREW ITS OFFER TO HOST A RAILWAY SEMINAR, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THE SECRETARIAT SEEK ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM UNDP TO CONTINUE THIS PROJECT.

3. UNDP REPRESENTATIVE INTERVENED EARLY IN MEETING TO ANNOUNCE PLANS TO STRICTLY ADHERE TO 1977 PROJECT EXPENDITURE CEILING WHICH WAS MADE KNOWN IN JULY. THIS DID NOT DISSUADE NUMBER OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (INTER ALIA BANGLADESH, INDIA, SRI LANKA) FROM MAKING REPEATED REQUESTS FOR INCREASED UNDP SUPPORT FOR VARIOUS SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS PROJECTS.

4. IN AREA HIGHWAY AND HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA, NETHERLANDS, INDONESIA STRESSED NEED TO GIVE PRIORITY ATTENTION TO TRAFFIC PROBLEMS IN BIG CITIES WHILE AFGHANISTAN AND A NUMBER OF OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES GAVE VIGOROUS SUPPORT TO RURAL TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT. BANGLADESH NOTED DECLINE IN WORLD BANK SUPPORT FOR TRANSPORT IN THE REGION AND HIGHLIGHTED THE COUNTRY'S INABILITY TO MOVE MATERIALS FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

5. THE PRINCIPAL AGENDA ITEM WAS CONSIDERATION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RESTRUCTURED COMMITTEE ON SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS. INDIA, WITH SUPPORT OF SRI LANKA MADE A PROPOSAL TO CHANGE PARAGRAPH 8 OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE TERMS OF THE SHIPPING PORTS AND INLAND WATERWAYS UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BANGKO 28764 01 OF 02 181120Z

WING TO ENABLE THE SECRETARIAT TO GIVE MORE ATTENTION TO SHIPPERS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SHIPPER ORGANIZATIONS. THE U.S. JOINED INDONESIA, JAPAN, NEW ZEALAND AND A NUMBER OF THE OTHER DELEGATES IN OPPOSING THE SUGGESTED CHANGE. WHEN IT APPEARED THAT NO COMPROMISE COULD BE REACHED, THE CHAIRMAN ADJOURNED THE MEETING AND SUGGESTED THAT THIS ITEM BE TAKEN UP FIRST THING THE NEXT DAY. ON THE NEXT DAY, THE PHILIPPINES REPRESENTATIVE PROPOSED A SUBSTANTIALLY Milder SUB-

STITUTE AMENDMENT WHICH THE DELEGATES SUPPORTED. JAPAN QUESTIONED WHETHER TOURISM SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OPENED UP ANOTHER ARGUMENT. NEW ZEALAND JOINED BY AUSTRALIA TOOK THE VIEW THAT IT SHOULD BE EXCLUDED. THE MAJORITY OF THE DELEGATES INCLUDING JAPAN, BANGLADESH, PHILIPPINES AND SRI LANKA SUPPORTED CONTINUATION OF ESCAP WORK IN THIS FIELD WITH CONDITION THAT ALL PROPOSED PROJECTS BE COORDINATED WITH WTO PRIOR TO APPROVAL. THE U.S. JOINED THE SUPPORTERS.

6. THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATE QUESTIONED WHETHER EACH WING OF THE NEWLY STRUCTURED COMMITTEE WOULD MEET SIMULTANEOUSLY OR DIVIDE THE TIME AND MEET ONE FOLLOWING THE OTHER. THE JAPANESE DELEGATE SUGGESTED THE LATTER. THE COMMITTEE SUGGESTED THAT THIS MATTER INCLUDING THE DURATION OF THE MEETING BE LEFT FOR THE ACPR TO WORK OUT WITH THE SECRETARIAT AT THEIR NEXT MEETING.

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 28764 02 OF 02 181100Z

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 AF-08 ARA-10 EA-09 EUR-12

NEA-10 L-03 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-02

INR-07 NSAE-00 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-06 OES-06 IGA-02

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R 180830Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4815

UNCLAS FINAL SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 28764

7. DURING CONSIDERATIONS OF ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELDS OF SHIPPING, PORTS AND INLAND WATERWAYS, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THAT GOVERNMENTS GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT. DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE REGION CONSIDERED THIS TO BE ONE OF THEIR GREATEST PROBLEMS. THE SECRETARIAT NOTED THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY NORWAY IN ESTABLISHING SHIPPERS ORGANIZATIONS AND

DEVELOPMENT OF A SET OF MODELS TO DETERMINE SHIPPING COSTS. A NUMBER OF DELEGATES (AUSTRALIA, JAPAN, NEW ZEALAND, BANGLADESH AND THE U.S.) COMMENTED ON DELAYS IN RECDPVING THE SHIPPING DOCUMENTATION. MOST SHIPPING DOCUMENTS, INCLUDING THE PROGRAM OF WORK AND PRIORITIES WERE DISTRIBUTED DURING THE MEETING. THE SECRETARIAT CITED SHORTAGE OF STAFF AND FREQUENT OFFERS AND WITHDRAWALS OF ASSISTANCE BY REGIONAL MEMBERS AS REASONS FOR THE DELAY. SOME DELEGATES WERE OF THE OPINION THAT THE SECRETARIAT WAS ATTEMPTING TO COVER TOO MANY ACTIVITIES WITH THE LIMITED RESOURCES AVAILABLE. THE PROGRAM OF WORK AND PRIORITIES FOR THIS WING OF THE COMMITTEE WAS POORLY PREPARED AND WIDELY CRITICIZED BY A LARGE NUMBER OF DELEGATES. IT WAS UNNECESSARY FOR THE U.S. TO COMMENT ON THIS ISSUE. THE COMMITTEE SPENT MOST OF A DAY TRYING TO DETERMINE THE STATUS OF THE VARIOUS PROJECTS INCLUDING THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT THEM. IN DISGUST BANGLADESH SUGGESTED AT THE END OF THE WORKDAY

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 28764 02 OF 02 181100Z

THAT THE SECRETARIAT CORRECT THE MISTAKES IN THE WORK PROGRAM AND RETURN IT TO THE COMMITTEE THE NEXT DAY FOR CONSIDERATION. A CORRECTED VERSION WAS PREPARED, DISTRIBUTED, REVIEWED AND APPROVED THE LAST WORKING DAY.

WHITEHOUSE

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